

# **A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR EXAMINING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIGH PERFORMANCE SYSTEMS AND ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOUR**

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*Despite the objective of high performance work systems (HPWS) to provide a work environment that is conducive for high performance, most literature on HPWS is more concerned with its effect on organisational performance. There are only a number of studies that have examined the effect of HPWS on individual attitudes and behaviour, such as organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB). The limited number of studies on the examination of HPWS and OCB is unfortunate because OCB is considered an important element in employee's performance that can help the organisation to sustain its competitive advantage. Hence, the purpose of this paper is to provide a conceptual framework for examining the relationship between HPWS and employee OCB, in which job satisfaction and organisational commitment play the mediating role in this relationship.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

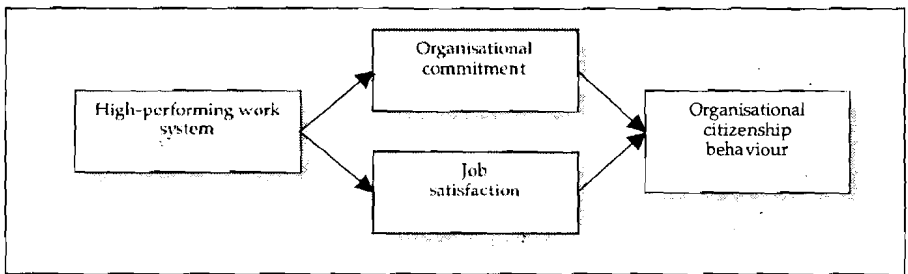
The concept of high performing work systems (HPWSs), which is a variant of best practices in human resource management (HRM), has become a topic of interest among the management scholars in the recent years because it is said to lead to better organisational performance. As such, the vast majority of studies conducted on HPWS are more concerned with its effect on organisational performance (Barnard & Rodgers, 2000; Bartel, 2004; Huselid & Becker, 1997; Moynihan, Gardner, Park, & Wright, 2001; Preuss, 2003; Richard & Johnson, 2004; Varma, Beatty, Schneier, & Ulrich, 1999; Whitfield & Poole, 1997). This notwithstanding, HPWS is supposed to provide a work environment that is conducive for high employee performance. As indicated by Tomer (2001), "the main idea of HPWS is to create an organization based on employee involvement, commitment and empowerment" (pg. 64). In view of that, it is rather surprising that studies that link HPWS to individual performance are rather limited (Harley, 2002). This is most unfortunate because according to Takeuchi (2003), without understanding the mediating processes through which HRM practices affect performance, i.e. the effect that it has on employees' attitudes and behaviours,

advances in the strategic area of HRM will encounter much difficulty in progressing. In order to know how HPWS affects organisational performance, it is important to find out how it affects employees' attitudes and behaviours because according to job performance theory (Campbell, 1990), performance is behaviour and therefore, organisational performance is dependent on the performance of its employees.

The findings from the few studies that examine the effect of HPWS on individual performance have been positive. For example, Gould-Williams (2004) found a direct relationship between HPWS and employee job related attitudes (job satisfaction, commitment, motivation and intention to quit). However, other studies have found indirect relationship between HPWS and employee behaviour. One of them is a study by Zacharatos, Barling, and Iverson (2005), which showed that HPWS indirectly affects individual safety performance via trust and perceived safety climate. Other than that Takeuchi, Marinova, Lepak, and Moon (2004) found that the relationship between HPWS and organisational citizenship behaviour is mediated by organisational justice climate. Most importantly, Paré and Tremblay (2004) pointed out that the role of HPWS on the attitude-behaviour relationship is still unclear and requires further investigation.

One of desirable employee behaviours that could lead to outstanding organisational performance is organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB). Due to this fact, extensive studies have been conducted to determine factors that could lead to enhanced OCB among employees (Bolon, 1997; Kelley & Hoffman, 1997; Organ & Ryan, 1995; MacKenzie, Podsakoff, & Ahearne, 1998; Norizan, Abdullah, & Wan Shakizah, 2003; Piercy, Lane, & Cravens, 2002; Menguc, 2000; Schnake & Dumler, 2003). Among antecedents of OCB and other citizenship like behaviours that have been extensively studied by past researchers include: (a) attitudinal variables (e.g., job satisfaction, organisational commitment, personality, and trust) (b) work environment variables (e.g., task characteristics, task routinisation, and task feedback), (c) organisational characteristics (e.g., perceived organisational support and fairness, perceived co-worker support, and perceived job insecurity), and (d) leadership behaviours. However, studies that link HPWS to OCB are still lacking. Therefore in this paper, it is suggested that HPWS could provide an environment which encourages employees to exhibit OCB. This is because as mentioned, HPWS creates a work environment in which employees are empowered and are encouraged to get more involved in various aspects of organisational activities. Such environment is often associated with heightened job satisfaction and organisational commitment (Dodd-McCue & Wright, 1996; Laschinger, Finegan, & Shamian, 2001), which both are identified as main predictors of OCB (Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie, 2006; Organ & Ryan, 1995).

Therefore, the objective of this paper is to provide a conceptual framework for examining the relationship between HPWS and OCB, in which job satisfaction and organisational commitment play the mediating role in this relationship. As shown in Figure 19.1, it is proposed that HPWS would create an environment that heightens employee organisational commitment and job satisfaction and this would lead to the development of OCB. Hence, the paper will first discuss OCB, followed by a discussion on job satisfaction and organisational commitment, HPWS, and how each of these variables relates to each other.



**Figure 19.1: The conceptual framework showing the relationship between HPWS and OCB**

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

### **Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)**

*OCB* is basically an individual extra-role performance. The importance of extra-role behaviour in allowing organisations to perform effectively and improve their organisational performance was first found to be discussed academically in 1938 (Arlene, 2003). Since then it has captured the interest and attention of researchers from multiple disciplines, (like organisational behaviour, human resource management, psychology, and marketing (Schnake, 1991). In an attempt to understand factors that motivate employees to perform more than their formal job description, researchers started to introduce and examine several extra-role behavioural constructs such as organisational citizenship behaviour (Bateman & Organ, 1983; Organ, 1988), prosocial organisational behaviour (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986), contextual performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993 as cited in Organ & Ryan, 1995), and organisational spontaneity (George & Brief, 1992 as cited in Organ & Ryan, 1995). Among all of these constructs, *OCB* is the one that has been widely used to promulgate the extra-role behaviour

or performance. According to Organ (1988), OCB is basically “an individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognised by an organisation formal reward system and that in aggregate promotes the effective functioning of the organisation” (pg. 4). This conception of OCB stresses that OCB is discretionary in its nature and consists of contributions that are not compelled by the job description nor contractually rewarded (Organ et al., 2006).

At present, the concept of OCB that reflects employees’ work behaviour that goes beyond their pre-determined job description has been widely acknowledged and accepted by academics and practitioners as a kind of behaviour that is important to organisational performance. This notion is further supported by Reis (2002) who argued that in order to sustain success for a longer term, organisations must be supported by employees who are willing to go beyond their prescribed role requirements and explicitly reward behaviour. Furthermore, he added that it is very difficult for organisations to anticipate all the behaviours needed for achieving organisational goals through written job description. Hence, for that reason organisations need to understand what OCB is all about and what factors contribute to its performance.

### **Job Satisfaction, Organisational Commitment, and OCB**

The interest in these two attitudes is mainly due to their positive association not only to OCB, but also other organisational outcomes such as intention to stay (Moncrief, Babakus, Cravens, & Johnston, 1997), service quality, customer satisfaction and productivity (Susskind, Borchgrevink, Macmar & Brymer, 2000; Wright, Gardner, & Moynihan, 2003). Nonetheless, literature had, shown that job satisfaction and organisational commitment are two robust predictors of OCB (Organ & Ryan, 1995). In general, job satisfaction can be defined as the extent to which employees like their work (Ellickson, 2002). Locke (1976 as cited in Netemeyer, Boles, McKee, & McMurrian, 1997) described job satisfaction as a positive emotional state or response that resulted from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences, and Vroom (1964 as cited in Atieh, 1987) defined it as affective orientation towards one’s current work role. By integrating the two definitions together, job satisfaction has been mostly conceptualised as both comprising affect and cognition based components (Atieh, 1987; Netemeyer et al., 1997). Basically, the cognitive component consists of beliefs about the job and its characteristics and the affective component refers to characteristic feeling states or mood at work (Atieh, 1987).

As for organisational commitment, Allen and Meyer (1990) conceptualised the construct as comprising three components which include affective, normative, and continuance. Affective commitment is related to “employee’s emotional attachment to an organisation”, while continuance commitment refers

to “commitment based on the cost that the employee associates with leaving the organisation”. Normative commitment relates to “employee’s feeling of obligation to remain with an organisation” (Allen & Meyer, 1990).

The relationships between job satisfaction and organisational commitment to *OCB* have consistently shown to be positive and significant (Organ & Ryan, 1995). For instance, a study by Kuehn and Al-Busaidi (2002) reported an existence of reliable statistical relationship between *OCB* and job satisfaction. An earlier study conducted by Bateman and Organ (1983) also reported a positive correlation between general measures of job satisfaction and supervisory ratings of citizenship behaviour. Other studies that confirmed a direct relationship between job satisfaction and *OCB* include Bolon (1997), MacKenzie et al. (1998), Netemeyer et al. (1997), and Yoon and Suh (2003).

Similarly, most of the empirical studies conducted to test the relationship between organisational commitment and *OCB* produced positive support (Brief & Motowidlo, 1986; Bolon, 1997; Kuehn & Al-Busaidi, 2002; Organ & Ryan, 1995). Nonetheless, among the three types of commitment described by Allen and Meyer (1990), most literature have shown that affective commitment is a better predictor of *OCB* than normative and continuance commitment. This means people who feel higher levels of attachment towards the organisations they work for are more likely to engage in *OCB*. This is probably best explained using the theory of social exchange (Blau, 1964). In fact the relationship between job satisfaction and *OCB* can also be explained using this theory.

In general, the social exchange theory posited that individuals tend to evaluate their relationship with another entity - in this case the organization – in terms of fair exchange. This means if their experience with the organisation has been positive, it is fair to reciprocate this with positive behaviours. Therefore, people who perceive the relationship that they have with their organisation as a fair social exchange tend to increase their attachment to the organisation and this increased attachment encourages *OCB*. As for job satisfaction, it is said that satisfied employees would exhibit their gratitude by engaging in *OCB*.

### **High Performance Work System (HPWS)**

There are many predictors of affective commitment and job satisfaction. However in this paper, it is argued that HPWS, which is known to some as high-involvement or high commitment work practices, can elicit high affective commitment and increase job satisfaction among the employees and eventually lead to *OCB*. Most organisations have realised that traditional forms of work organisation, characterised by narrow job classifications, top-down communications, and rigid hierarchical structure, are no longer effective in today’s environment. In recent years, a newer form of work organisation had been proposed and has received a lot of attention. This new form of work

organisation is known as high performance work system (HPWS) or high commitment work system, and it is said to be the most appropriate for modern competitive conditions (Wood, 1999). This is because according to Tomer (2001),

“high performance work systems are a form of organisation in which workers are not agents of principals, are not controlled by structures of incentives, but have become owners or principals in their outlook. These workers are identified with, committed to, and fully participating in the organisation”.

HPWS has been defined in various ways by different researchers, but most of these definitions agreed that it involves particular configurations of work structures, practices, and processes (Gephart & Van Buren, 1996). For example, Moynihan et al. (2001) defined HPWS as the type of work system that are characterised by rigorous selection, investment in training, work design so that employees have opportunities for participation and decision making, and reward structures designed to recognise high performers and promote from within. Similarly, Wood and Wall (2002 as cited in Zacharatos et al., 2005) conceptualise HPWS as a group of separate but interconnected human resource practices that together recruit, select, develop, motivate, and retain employees.

Different authors had emphasised slightly different features and management practices in describing HPWS (Barnard & Rodgers, 2000; Cutcher-Gershenfeld, 1991; Fits-enz, 1993; Huselid, 1995; Kochan & Osterman, 1994; Pfeffer, 1998; Wood, 1999). However for the purpose of this discussion, HPWS is considered as the human resource practice designed to provide a positive environment in which employees feel motivated to contribute positively to the organisational performance. Hence the seven management practices describing HPWS as identified by Pfeffer (1998) is most appropriate for the current discussion because they incorporate most of the practices that are included by other authors in their studies. These seven practices are: (a) employment security, (b) selective hiring of new personnel, (c) self-managed teams and decentralisation of decision making as the basic principles of organisational design, (d) comparatively high compensation contingent on organisational performance, (e) extensive training, (f) reduced status distinctions and barriers, and (g) extensive sharing on financial and performance information throughout the organisation.

There are many competitive benefits associated with the use of HPWS. A study by Varma et al. (1999) found that HPWS is related to enhanced organisational financial and operational performance. Similarly, Huselid and Becker (1997) found that HPWS is positively related to corporate financial performance, and a substantial number of studies found that it raises worker

productivity (Bryson, Forth, & Kirby, 2005; Ichniowski & Shaw, 1999; Ichniowski, Shaw, & Prennushi, 1997). Other studies suggested that HPWS is positively related to occupational safety at the organisational level (Zacharatos et al., 2005), organisational innovation (Richard & Johnson, 2004), and performance quality through high information quality (Preuss, 2003).

### **The Relationship between HPWS and OCB**

Both HPWS and OCB are concepts that have raised a lot of interest in academic research. Even though studies that relate these two concepts are scarce, it is still possible to postulate the existence of such relationship, again via social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and Gouldner's (1960) norm of reciprocity. According to Blau and Gouldner, any positive beneficial actions directed at the employees by the organisation can create an impetus for them to reciprocate positively through their attitudes and/or behaviours. As mentioned earlier, HPWS provides an environment conducive for high performance through provision of favourable management practices. It is therefore reasonable to expect that when employees feel that the organisation has fulfilled its obligations in providing such working conditions, i.e. HPWS, they would reciprocate by engaging in organisational citizenship behaviours.

It has been asserted that human resource practices will lead to organisational effectiveness by enhancing OCB. Results from Ehrnrooth (2002) and Paré and Tremblay's (2004) studies seemed to support this claim. Ehrnrooth's (2002) study found the existence of a strong significant direct relationship between sophisticated HRM practices and citizenship behaviour. On the other hand, Paré and Tremblay (2004) found that IT professionals who benefit from high-involvement HR practices are more likely to reciprocate through citizenship behaviours. Furthermore, as pointed out by Tomer (2001), people working in organisations with HPWS environment have positive attitudes toward their jobs and organisations because these people have the owner or principal outlook. They might be able to satisfy their need for self-actualisation and experience deep owner motivation. Therefore, it is argued in this paper that HPWS and each of its elements listed by Pfeffer (1998) would influence individual performance, specifically employee OCB.

However, as indicated by several researchers in the area of HPWS and HRM, the relationship between HPWS and organisational outcomes is not direct. Takeuchi et al. (2004) found that the relationship is mediated by organisational justice climate. However in this paper, it is argued the job satisfaction and organisational commitment play a very important role in developing OCB among employees. This is because job satisfaction and organisational commitment are main predictors of OCB (Organ & Ryan, 1995), and HPWS can lead to job

satisfaction (Berg, 1999) and organisational commitment (Takeuchi, 2003). Therefore, the relationship of each of the element of HPWS to job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and OCB will be elaborated below.

### *Employment Security*

In general, employment security refers to the extent to which an organisation provides stable employment for employees (Zacharatos et al., 2005). With employment security, employees understand that the probability of them being laid off at the first sign of financial difficulty, or due to capricious supervisory behaviours is rather small. Under this situation, employees tend to have higher satisfaction and commitment to the organisation. Indeed a study on hotel employees by Jago and Deery (2004) found that job security is positively associated with job satisfaction and organisational commitment. This study has confirmed previous research that established similar findings (Ashford, Lee, & Bobko, 1989; Hundley, 2001; Yousef, 1998). In addition, Ganesan and Weitz (1996) showed that organisations that practise promotion from within, have promotion through seniority, have clear career paths and intra-organisational mobility - all of which signal job security - were seen as providing promotion opportunities to the employees. This study showed that these characteristics would enhance employee affective commitment toward the organisations.

Generally, employment security promotes employees performance because it encourages them to take a longer-perspective on their job and organisational performance (Pfeffer, 1999). Additionally, according to the social exchange perspective employees who feel secure about their current and future employment with an organisation would reciprocate it with positive citizenship behaviour. This notion is supported by King (2000) who found that employees who feel insecure about their jobs are less willing to act on behalf of the organisation. Moreover, a meta-analysis conducted by Sverke, Hellgren, and Naswall (2002) showed that high job insecurity impairs performance. However, a rather conflicting result was obtained in a study conducted on school teachers in Victoria, Australia which showed that contract teachers who reported more job insecurity also displayed more OCB than permanent teachers (Feather & Rauter, 2004). This study also found that there was no significant relationship between job insecurity and job satisfaction, as well as job insecurity and organisational commitment. The authors argued that this may due to an oversupply of labour in that particular area, and workers entered contingent work arrangements involuntarily. Hence, they performed more OCB in the expectation it would enhance their chances of being made permanent within the organisation.

Based on the empirical findings that employment security have a direct relationship with job satisfaction and organisational commitment and these two



variables are main predictors of OCB, it is predicted that both job satisfaction and organisational commitment are potential mediators in the relationship between employment security and OCB.

### *Selective Hiring*

In hiring new employees for HPWS, the skills and abilities of the candidates need to be carefully considered. It is important to ensure that employees are compatible with their work environment, i.e. having a person-organisation (P-O) fit. According to Kristoff (1996 as cited in Verquer, Beehr, & Wagner, 2003), a P-O fit is the compatibility between people and organisations that occurs when: (a) at least one entity provides what the other needs, or (b) they share similar fundamental characteristics, or (c) both. This theoretically means that if there is a fit between the person and the organisation, the person is going to be happy or content in the work environment.

It is argued that a P-O fit is important because it increases one's job satisfaction and enhances organisational commitment, which would lead to OCB. Autry and Daugherty (2003) had identified six types of P-O fit: company cognitive fit, company affective fit, supervisor cognitive fit, supervisor affective fit, co-worker cognitive fit, and co-worker affective fit. Autry and Daugherty found that only co-worker cognitive and affective fits were not associated to job satisfaction. The authors argued that this lack of relationship might be due to the job factor (warehouse operations) which often requires the individuals to work independently. Nonetheless, other studies indeed showed that fit is a predictor of job satisfaction (Harville, 1992; Tepeci & Bartlett, 2002; Verquer et al., 2003), and organisational commitment (Verquer et al., 2003). Furthermore, the study by Tepeci and Bartlett (2002) found that a P-O fit is negatively correlated to intention to leave, which is an indicator of continuance commitment.

With regard to performance, a meta-analysis by Kristoff-Brown, Zimmerman, and Johnson (2005) showed that even though there is a positive relationship between a P-O fit and performance, the correlations are either low or moderate. However, thus far, no study has been found to specifically relate a P-O fit and OCB. Even so, based on currently available studies on this topic, we argued that selective hiring based on a P-O fit can affect individual's OCB because it enhances job satisfaction and organisational commitment.

### *Self-managed Teams*

Managing employees into work teams has several advantages, which include: (a) teams substitute peer-based for hierarchical control of work, (b) teams allow employees to pool their ideas in coming up with better and more creative

solutions to problems, and most importantly, (c) teams can reduce costs by substituting peer for hierarchical control and by removing layers of hierarchy (Pfeffer, 1998). In a self-managing environment, Mans and Sims (1984 as cited in Uhl-Bien & Graen, 1998) indicated that many functions traditionally reserved for managers, such as monitoring performance, taking corrective action, hiring, disciplining and scheduling, have become the responsibility of subordinates. In self-managed teams, members are responsible to carry out these responsibilities collectively.

As suggested by Wagner, Parker, and Christiansen (2003), climate of self-determination enhances ownership belief among members of work teams, and this is positively related to their attitudes toward the organisation. Similarly, other studies also support this finding (Batt, 2004; Uhl-Bien & Graen, 1998). Most interestingly, Kirkman and Shapiro (2001) conducted a study on self-managed work team job satisfaction and organisational commitment in several countries. They found that cultural values, i.e. collectivism, power distance, and doing orientation and determinism, would affect the work team job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Besides, past studies have also shown that working in teams has encouraged employees to engage in OCB (Somech & Drach-Zahavy, 2004; Podsakoff, Aherney, & McKenzie, 1997; Tjosvold, Hui, & Yu, 2003). This is because working in a self-managed or empowered environment results in more satisfied and committed employees (Laschinger et al., 2001). According to Laschinger and friends empowering the employees increases their trust in the management and eventually this influences job satisfaction and organisational commitment. As such, it is argued that working in self-managed teams can increase one's job satisfaction and organisational commitment, which in turn can encourage OCB.

### **Compensation Based on Organisational Performance**

A compensation scheme that is based on organisational performance, or in short, performance-related pay can take several different forms, including gain sharing, profit sharing, stock ownership, pay for skill, etc. These types of compensation schemes are thought to provide an appealing employee benefit and improve organisational performance by motivating employees to promote their shared financial interest with the organisation (Wagner et al., 2003). The literature reviewed by Brown and Sessions (2003) pointed out that the findings regarding performance-related pay is plagued with mixed results. Some literature indicated profit sharing and employee share ownership schemes are positively related to individual and organisational performance, while others indicated that there is no relationship. On the other hand, Lau and Ngo (2004) concluded based on the literature that they reviewed that there is a relationship between performance-related pay and organisational performance.

With regard to job related attitudes, previous studies generally provided some evidence regarding the relationship between compensation and job satisfaction (Ellickson, 2002; Flaherty & Pappas, 2002; Lam, Baum, & Pine, 2001) and organisational commitment (Lam & Zhang, 2003). However, there are also studies that refute these findings (Igalens & Roussel, 1999). A study by Paul and Anantharaman (2003) found that employee ownership has no significant effect on organisational commitment, but Wagner et al. (2003) found that ownership beliefs, which is promoted by participation in a profit sharing plan, is positively related to employee attitudes toward the organisation. Furthermore, the study by Brown and Sessions (2003) also showed that there is considerable satisfaction amongst performance-related pay employees.

Regardless of these conflicting findings, according to Pfeffer (1998), it is important to have a compensation system contingent on organisational performance in HPWS because such compensation scheme encourages employees to act like owners. Under this kind of system, employees tend to be more concerned of the performance of the organisation because employees would also benefit when the organisation performs well. Furthermore, such system encourages the employees to pursue in the interest of the organisation, making them feel that they play a significant role in the performance of the organisation. Consequently, this would lead to higher job satisfaction and organisational commitment among the employees.

It is believed that pay-for-performance can - to some extent - affect employee OCB. Unfortunately, there are not many studies that relate pay for performance to employee citizenship behaviour. Empirical evidence that supported this notion can be seen in studies conducted by Deckop, Mangel, and Cirka (1999), and Deckop, Meriman and Blau (2004). Their studies found that there is a relationship between pay-for-performance and OCB, yet the relationship between these two variables can either be positive or negative depending on circumstances. For instance, if employees perceived organisation pay-for-performance system is strictly based on task performance then such system will lead to decrease in the frequency of OCB (Deckop et al., 1999; Organ et al., 2006). In addition Deckop et al. (1999; 2004) also found that the correlation between pay-for-performance and organisational citizenship is not direct, but moderated by work related factors such as commitment and employee risk preferences. Even so, it is argued here that organisational commitment is a mediator to the relationship between performance-related pay and OCB. This is because there are a substantial number of studies that shows a direct relationship between job satisfaction and organisational commitment and OCB (Ackfeldt & Coote, 2005; Bateman & Organ, 1983). And since there is a direct relationship, it is not appropriate to indicate that organisational commitment only enhances the relationship between pay-for-performance and OCB. Instead, it

is more apt to say that job satisfaction and organisational commitment mediate the relationship between pay for performance and OCB.

### Extensive Training

Training is a planned and systematic effort to modify or develop knowledge, skill and attitude through a learning experience, to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities (Buckley & Caple, 1995 as cited in Ahmad & Abu-Bakar, 2003). Training ensures that the employees have all the needed skills and knowledge for them to perform their jobs efficiently. Indeed, the study by Román, Ruiz, and Munuera (2002) showed that sales training investment is an important means of increasing sales performance. In HPWS, training is particularly essential because HPWS rely on employee skill and initiative to work independently in identifying and resolving problems, to initiate changes in work methods, and also to take the responsibility for quality (Pfeffer, 1998). Hence, in order to encourage OCB among the employees, it is important to provide them with extensive training.

Providing extensive training signals to the employees that they are important to the organisation, because otherwise why would the company spend so much money on them. In addition, this also signals employment security within the organisation, or even if the employees have to leave the organisation they have been equipped with enough skills to easily get jobs elsewhere. Currently, the studies that relate extensive training to OCB are very limited. Nonetheless, Ackfeldt and Coote (2005) found that providing opportunities for professional development to customer contact employees of an upscale food and grocery retailer do lead to higher OCB. This shows that when employees are given enough opportunities to upgrade their skills and knowledge they would have more positive attitudes towards their jobs and they are more likely to exhibit OCB.

Most researchers agreed that training in general has the ability to affect individuals' attitude with regard to their jobs (Ellickson, 2002; Harvey, Bolam, Gregory, & Erdos, 2001; Jago & Deery, 2004; Lingard & Yesilyurt, 2003; Tuten, Gray & Glascoff, 2000). In fact, some of these studies had shown that training in general enhances job satisfaction among the employees (Ellickson, 2002; Jago & Deery, 2004). A study on white-collar workers in Malaysia found that the availability of training, support for training, motivation to learn, training environment and perceived benefits of training were all significantly correlated with affective commitment, normative commitment, and overall commitment (Ahmad & Abu-Bakar, 2003). Therefore, it is proposed that providing extensive training to employees would enhance their job satisfaction and organisational commitment, and eventually their OCB.

Status distinctions are prevalent in most organisations. However, status distinctions are not beneficial in the HPWS context. In fact, it is said to create unwanted barriers between people that breed resentment, and harm motivation and performance, besides reducing the familiarity between top management and shop floor employees (Zacharatos et al., 2005). Reducing status distinctions means making all employees across different levels to feel that they are all the same, i.e. the employees of the organisation. According to Pfeffer (1998), this is achieved in two principal ways: (a) symbolically, through the use of language or labels, physical space, and dress, and (b) substantively, in the reduction of organisation's degree of wage inequality. The reduction of status differences promotes open communication, necessary in organisations implementing HPWS. This is because HPWS is a work system that encourages employees to get involved in most of the organisational operation and management. Therefore, it also signals to all organisational members that they are both valuable and valued.

Currently, reduced status distinctions are not exactly a popular topic for study. However, a study by Zacharatos et al. (2005) had indicated that HPWS, in which reduced status distinctions is one of its elements, is positively associated with organisations' occupational safety and also individual safety performance via trust in management and perceived safety climate. Furthermore, a study in team sport industry suggested that maintaining harmony within the team by reducing wage disparities, a status symbol, may be most important in team sports where the rule of the game requires a large number of players to interact (Frick, Prinz, & Winkelmann, 2003). Indeed, in a HPWS environment, employees work in teams and interactions among these members are very important. As such, it is suggested that reduced distinctions would increase job satisfaction and organisational commitment among the employees because it makes individuals and teams feel comfortable and they are encouraged to contribute their minds as well as their physical energy to the organisation, and eventually, this would lead to OCB.

## *Sharing of Information*

Literature shows that information sharing can take place between business partners, within a work unit and/or between individuals and their management. Information sharing between individuals and their management is important because according to Pfeffer (1998), the sharing of information on things such as financial performance, strategy, and operational measures by the management conveys to the employees that they are trusted. Furthermore, Pfeffer also

indicated that the information shared by the management with employees can help the employees to perform their job better because they are more aware of the organisational requirements.

Indeed, the practice of information sharing has been beneficial to organisations. A study by Pecci, Bewkey, Goslel, and Willman (2005) found that sharing of general information regarding the organisation, information about performance targets, and performance feedback have a positive impact on labour productivity. Similarly, McHugh, Cutcher-Gershenfeld, and Bridge (2005) also indicated that for organisations that implement ESOP, sharing of ESOP information with employees has a positive impact on managerial perceptions of firm performance. Even though there are no studies that relate information sharing practice to individual behaviours, the above findings are indicators that information sharing does affect employee behaviour, and possibly their citizenship behaviour.

In addition, being more informed about the organisation and its performance should increase employee job satisfaction and organisational commitment because they know that the organisation is committed in helping them performing their jobs. Surprisingly, in the US steel industry, this is not the case because Berg (1999) found that information sharing does not significantly affect job satisfaction. However, this finding is only true for this industry and cannot be generalised to other situations. Especially when Johlke and Duhan (2000) indicated that frequency of communication between employee and management is positively associated with job satisfaction. On the contrary, when employees are provided with organisation-related information, such as information about changes in organisational policies and procedures, financial results, employee and group successes, and customer feedback, they have been reported to have higher organisational commitment (Ng, Butts, Vandenberg, DeJoy, & Wilson, 2006). Regarding the finding concerning job satisfaction, it is argued here that the practice of information sharing by the management can enhance employee job satisfaction and organisational commitment because information sharing signals trust by the management and therefore, employees may develop positive attitudes toward their job. Eventually, these may lead to OCB.

## CONCLUSION

Past literature had shown that HPWS and OCB can significantly contribute toward organisational effectiveness and success. Literature also indicated that these two variables have significant relationships with job satisfaction and organisational commitment. Yet research that try to examine the inter-relationship between all of these variables (i.e. HPWS, job satisfaction, organisational commitment, and OCB) were found to be very limited.

Based on the view that organisations have to operate within a system, it is postulated that a system such as HPWS that stresses on the concept of empowerment and that provides an environment conducive for high performance through provision of favourable management practices could also encourage employees to display citizenship-like behaviour. Yet, having a good work system may not trigger employees to perform beyond their pre-disposed job specifications unless they are satisfied with their work environment and are willingly to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organisation. With these assumptions, a conceptual model that links between HPWS to OCB through employees work attitudes, i.e. job satisfaction and organisational commitment, is proposed.

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